

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the final Office Action dated December 9, 2008, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-32 were previously pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 1, 14, 20, 25 and 27-32 have been amended, claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein; and claims 33-35 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1 and 3-35 are all the claims now pending in the present application. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims or by the new claims added. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 8-12, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamura (U.S. Publication No. 2005/0146966, hereafter "Kawamura"). Claim 12 has been canceled thereby rendering the above rejection to that claim moot. Additionally, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32 to help further distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art. Claim 1, as amended, recites the following features:

“[a] reception device which obtains a license, transmitted from a transmission device, for permitting use of a content, and uses the content based on the license,

wherein at least a license import period and a license ID are assigned to the license, the license import period being a period during which the license is allowed to be imported to said reception device and made available for use,

said reception device comprising:

a license importing unit operable to import the license transmitted from the transmission device;

a log recording unit operable to store a license import log including the license ID and the license import period, at least until the license import period expires; and

a license import controlling unit operable to prohibit importing of the license to be performed by said license importing unit, in the case where the license import log includes a license ID that is the same as the license ID of the license to be imported by said license importing unit,

wherein the license import period is a period that is set separately from a validity period of the license, and

said license importing unit is operable to (1) determine whether or not a current time is within the license import period, (2) import the license when determined that the current time is within the license import period, and (3) avoid importing the license when determined that the current time is not within the license import period.” (Emphasis added).

The features noted above in independent claim 1 are similarly recited in independent claims 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32. Additionally, the features emphasized above are fully supported by the Applicants' disclosure.

Independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32 have been amended to point out that the license import period is a period that is set separately from a validity period of the license. Additionally, as amended, the claims point out that the license importing unit (or method) (1) determines whether or not a current time is within the license import period, (2) imports the license when determined that the current time is within the license import period, and (3) avoids importing the license when determined that the current time is not within the license import period. No such features are believed to be disclosed or suggested by the cited prior art.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Kawamura for disclosing or suggesting all the features recited in independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32. However, the Applicants assert that Kawamura fails to disclose or suggest all the features now recited in independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32, as amended.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicates that "the license import period" of the present invention is a general condition for using a license, and that employing the license import period until the import period expires is also a well known practice in the art. However, the Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner on this point.

There is an advantage of employing a license import period separately from a validity period of the license. Specifically, the terminal apparatus needs to import a license within the license import period after obtaining the license in order to validate the license. Therefore, in the case where a license is not imported within the license import period by

the terminal apparatus, it is no longer possible to use the license. Thus, it is possible to delete the license regardless of a remaining period of the validity period of the license. This makes it possible (as described in the specification) that "*both of an unlimited license obtainment and an increase of data size to be managed can be prevented by managing the ID and validity period of the license obtained by the terminal apparatus as an import log of the license and holding the license import log at least until the import period of the license expires.*"

The Applicants believe that the present invention which employs the license import period separately from the validity period of the license would not have been obvious based on Kawamura, which merely discloses one of the periods.

Based on the above discussion, Kawamura fails to disclose or suggest that the license import period is a period that is set separately from a validity period of the license, and that a license importing unit or method (1) determines whether or not a current time is within the license import period, (2) imports the license when determined that the current time is within the license import period, and (3) avoids importing the license when determined that the current time is not within the license import period, as recited in independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32 (as amended).

Therefore, Kawamura fails to render obvious independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 32 (as amended). Likewise, Kawamura fails to render obvious claims 8-11 at least by virtue of their dependencies from independent claim 1.

In the Office Action, claims 2-5, 21, 22, 24 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamura in view of Corbin (U.S. Patent No. 5,138,712); claims 6, 7 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamura in view of Ginter et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,124,302); and claims 13-19, 28 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamura in view of Block et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003,0220883).

Claims 2-7 and 13-19 depend from independent claim 1; claims 21-24 depend from independent claim 20; claim 26 depends from independent claim 25; claim 28 depends from

independent claim 27; and claim 31 depends from independent claim 30.

As noted above, Kawamura fails to disclose or suggest all the features noted above in independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27 and 30. Additionally, Corbin, Ginter and Block fail to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Kawamura. Accordingly, no combination of Kawamura, Corbin, Ginter and Block would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claims 2-7, 13-19, 21-24, 26, 28 and 31 at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claims 1, 20, 25, 27 and 30.

New claims 33-35 are also believed to be distinguishable over the cited prior art. Additionally, claims 33-35 are fully supported by the Applicants' disclosure (see e.g. ¶ [0328] and ¶ [0330]).

Claims 33 and 34 are directed to the deletion of a previously stored license import log whose corresponding license import period has expired. No such features are disclosed or suggested by the cited prior art.

Additionally, claim 35 is directed to more detailed features of the message presented to a user regarding the reason why the license cannot be imported. However, at best, Kawamura discloses or suggests that a message is sent indicating that a requested license is not available. However, nowhere does Kawamura disclose or suggest details regarding a reason why the license cannot be imported. Thus, claim 35 is distinguished over the cited prior art.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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